

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-14 are all the claims pending in the application. By this Amendment, new claim 14 is added. Claims 1-4, 9 and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 1, 5<sup>1</sup> and 9-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of U.S. Patent No. 5,291,282 (hereinafter, "Nakagawa") and U.S. Patent No. 6,771,813 (hereinafter, "Katsuyama"), further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,688,266 (hereinafter, "Watanabe"). Claims 2 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over combination of U.S. Patent No. 5,291,282 (Nakagawa), U.S. Patent No. 6,771,813 (Katsuyama), U.S. Patent No. 3,688,266 (Watanabe) as applied to claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,574,374 (hereinafter, "Acharya").

Claims 3-4 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 7-8 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable because Nakagawa, in combination with other references, does not teach or suggest increasing a threshold value used for denoising if a previous pattern quantizing value is identical to a current pattern quantizing value, in combination with other elements of the claim.

Claims 5, 9 and 10 are patentable for reasons similar to those submitted for claim 1. The remaining dependent claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Although claim 4 is included in the Office Action as being rejected, Applicant believes that this is in error because claims 3 and 4 are indicated as being allowable on page 8 of the Office Action. Further, claim 4 depends from claim 3.

Applicant adds new claim 14 which is fully supported in the Specification, such as Fig. 1.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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